

Pursuant to the discussion at the interview, Applicants have amended the claims as indicated above. Specifically, Applicants have amended claims 8-10 as suggested by the Examiner in order to clarify the intent of the claims. In addition, the claimed invention has been defined as being an assay for the detection of proteins. With this amendment the invention is further distinguished from the prior art which is largely drawn to assays and methods for detecting nucleic acids.

As the above-presented amendments and remarks in no way add new matter or raise new issues for consideration and further address and overcome the rejections of the Examiner, reconsideration and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the present application, she is requested to contact MaryAnne Armstrong, PhD (Reg. No. 40,069) in the Washington DC area, at (703) 205-8000.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicants respectfully petition for a two (2) months extension of time filing a response in connection with the present application and the required fee of \$190.00 is attached hereto.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any

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overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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